

# Snacking and Australian Children

	Snack	Serve size	Low kJ ≤ 450kJ	Low GI* ≤ 55	Protein ≥ 3g	Sat Fat ≤ 2g	Fibre ≥ 2g	Source of Calcium ≥ 80mg
	100g yoghurt or custard#	100g	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
	Apple	166g	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗
	Paddle Pop®	68g	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
	2 wholegrain crispbread & peanut butter	25g	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
	200g reduced fat yoghurt	200g	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
	Cheese stick	20g	✓	N/A	✓	✗	✗	✓
	Nut bar	50g	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
	2 sweet plain biscuits	20g	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
	Muesli bar	28g	✗	✓/✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
	Rice crackers	25g	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
	Fruit muffin	80g	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
	Fruit bar	20g	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
	Potato chips	20g	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

The best snacking choices meet four or more criteria. All snacks contain less than 100mg sodium per serve

Satisfactory snacking choices meet three criteria

Lower nutrient density snacking options

Data sourced from Food Works Professional Xyris Software (Australia) Pty Ltd 2009 and Retail Product Nutrition Information

\* Average GI for that particular food ([www.glycaemicindex.com](http://www.glycaemicindex.com))

# Full fat yoghurt or custard



Australian children may be eating too much highly processed, nutrient-poor snack foods after school. Recent national survey data has found that almost half of all children aged 5 - 8 years consumed biscuits, cakes and pastries during the after school period, with almost 30% consuming snack foods, confectionery or cereal bars<sup>1</sup>. Such highly processed, carbohydrate-based foods are significant contributors of empty kilojoules, saturated fat and high GI carbohydrates, without offering the nutritional benefits of other key nutrients for children including calcium, protein and fibre.

A nutritionally balanced snack food for children should be 'nutrient dense' and offer a number of key nutritional benefits rather than solely acting as an energy source. This snacking checklist aims to guide health professionals and parents towards

more suitable options - options that are not only kilojoule and portion controlled but also provide some positive nutrients such as fibre, calcium and protein.

In general, protein-based foods such as yoghurt, other milk-based snacks as well as fresh fruit tick a number of nutritional requirements for growing children.

For long term weight control, it also appears that the GI load of the diet maybe important, and hence carbohydrate-based snack foods should be low GI where possible<sup>2</sup>.

The 2007 Australian National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey (ANCPAS) found that milk products and dishes were the most important dietary source of a number of key micronutrients in 5 - 8 year old children's diets during the after school period. In fact, the dairy group was the leading after school contributor to children's intake of calcium, zinc, riboflavin,

iodine, magnesium, vitamin A, phosphorus and potassium<sup>1</sup>.

It is also important to remember that food and eating should be enjoyable experiences for adults and children alike. Choosing fun and tasty snack foods for children that also offer something nutritionally is a win for parents and children alike.

**Good snack Checklist**

1. 400-600kJ/serve
2. Has calcium, protein or wholegrains and is low GI
3. Less than 2g of saturated fat per serve
4. Kids like it!

<sup>1</sup> Secondary analysis of the Australian National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey CSIRO 2010 (unpublished).

The 2007 Australian National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey was jointly funded by the Australian Government (through the Department of Health and Ageing, and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) and the Australian Food and Grocery Council.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas DE, Elliot EJ, Baur LA. Low glycaemic index or low glycaemic load diets for overweight and obesity (review ID: 0009-04). Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2007, Issue 3.

### Nutrition information per serve

Snack	Serve Size	Energy kJ	GI*	Protein g	Sat Fat g	Fibre g	Calcium mg
100g yoghurt or custard#	100g	403	Low	4.1	2	Neg	139
Apple	166g	375	Low	0.5	0	3.6	Neg
Paddle Pop®	68g	446	Low	2.3	1.6	Neg	90
2 wholegrain crispbread & peanut butter	25g	520	Low	4.5	1.6	2.8	10
200g reduced fat yoghurt	200g	780	Low	9.8	1.2	Neg	312
Cheese stick	20g	276	N/A	3.7	3.6	Neg	160
Nut bar	50g	897	Low	4.3	3.9	2.4	15
2 sweet plain biscuits	20g	379	High	1.3	1.6	0.4	Neg
Muesli bar	28g	499	Variable	2	2	1.7	Neg
Rice crackers	25g	415	High	1.9	0.2	0.6	Neg
Fruit muffin	80g	944	Low	6.9	2.1	1.4	Neg
Fruit bar	20g	301	High	0.3	0.6	1.2	Neg
Potato chips	20g	433	Medium	1.3	2.6	0.8	Neg

\* Average GI for that particular food ([www.glycaemicindex.com](http://www.glycaemicindex.com))  
# Full fat yoghurt or custard

